

# Revitalizing Intangible Heritage: Sustainable Tourism Strategies for Safeguarding Changsha's Cultural Memories

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## Abstract

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH), representing living cultural traditions, faces threats due to limited social exposure and declining inheritors, creating cultural and economic challenges. The global tourism industry has also faced unprecedented challenges from public health crises such as pandemics, which affect both cultural heritage preservation and visitor mobility. Recent research has shown that machine learning can serve as a critical tool for early outbreak prediction and crisis management in tourism planning. Tourism development presents opportunities to protect and sustainably leverage ICH resources. This study examines the integration of intangible cultural heritage protection with sustainable tourism development in Changsha, China—a historical city renowned for its rich cultural heritage. Combining literature analysis, field visits, and qualitative methods, the research systematically evaluates the current status of Changsha's intangible cultural heritage, identifying key challenges including aging inheritors, inadequate youth engagement, and fragmented promotion. Results highlight the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration, particularly involving local government, community groups, and cultural inheritors. Strategic recommendations include innovatively developing heritage-based tourism products, enhancing targeted promotional activities, and expanding the commercialization of local cultural assets to strengthen their protection. This research enriches the understanding of sustainable approaches to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage through tourism and provides practical insights applicable to similar urban heritage contexts. Ultimately, integrating intangible cultural heritage into Changsha's tourism sector can sustainably promote cultural preservation, enhance the local economy, and enrich tourist experiences.

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## Keywords

Intangible Cultural Heritage, Tourism Development, Countermeasures and Suggestions

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) represents the living expressions and traditions inherited from ancestors and passed to descendants, encompassing performing arts, rituals, crafts, oral traditions, and social practices (Timothy & Boyd, 2003). Despite its significance, ICH has historically suffered from insufficient social recognition, leading to degradation or even extinction in numerous regions worldwide (Richards, 2018). Such losses represent not only a decline in cultural diversity but also substantial economic implications, particularly in areas dependent upon cultural tourism (UNESCO, 2003; UNESCO, 2017). In response, tourism development has emerged globally as a pragmatic approach to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The integration of tourism and heritage protection can create mutual benefits: heritage assets can be conserved and revitalized, while tourism economies are simultaneously enriched (Throsby, 1999). Consequently, many governments now recognize intangible cultural heritage not merely as a cultural asset, but as a stable economic resource essential for sustainable regional development.

Changsha, the political and economic capital of Hunan Province in China, offers an illustrative example of integrating intangible cultural heritage into sustainable tourism. Known historically as the “Star City” or the “Famous City of Chu and Han”, Changsha boasts a continuous urban history spanning over three thousand years, marking it among China’s earliest nationally recognized historical and cultural cities. As the birthplace of Chu civilization and the vibrant Xiang-Chu culture, Changsha possesses a wealth of intangible cultural heritage, including renowned assets such as Xiang embroidery, Liuyang fireworks, traditional music, and diverse folk customs. Moreover, its tourism landscape uniquely combines mountains, rivers, islands, and urban attractions, offering diverse opportunities to leverage heritage in tourism development.

In recent years, the local government has demonstrated increased commitment by establishing exhibition halls and developing initiatives aimed explicitly at safeguarding Changsha’s intangible cultural heritage. Yet, despite these efforts, practical challenges persist—particularly related to insufficient participation by the younger generation, fragmented promotional strategies, and limited commercialization approaches that fail to fully capitalize on the city’s rich intangible heritage resources. Thus, exploring deeper integration strategies between intangible cultural heritage preservation and tourism development remains a vital research and practical objective.

## 1.2. Literature Review

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) has increasingly been recognized as a crucial component of sustainable tourism development globally (Timothy & Boyd, 2003; Richards, 2018). UNESCO's conventions and global initiatives highlight the imperative of integrating ICH within sustainable tourism frameworks to protect cultural diversity and support local economies (UNESCO, 2003; UNESCO, 2017).

ICH preservation through tourism is supported by various foundational theories, notably Throsby's cultural capital theory, emphasizing culture's economic and social benefits (Throsby, 1999). Richards's research underscores the importance of cultural authenticity in tourism experiences (Richards, 2011). Community-based tourism (CBT) and sustainable tourism theories advocate local community empowerment and equitable benefit-sharing in heritage tourism initiatives (Blackstock, 2005; Moscardo, 2008; Bramwell & Lane, 1993). Moreover, stakeholder theory accentuates multi-party collaboration for sustainable ICH management (Freeman, 1984).

Globally, the integration of intangible heritage into tourism development has been demonstrated through diverse cases. Japan's policy frameworks successfully balance preservation and commercialization of cultural heritage (Smith & Akagawa, 2018). South Korea provides a valuable model in community-driven heritage tourism development through initiatives like the Andong Mask Dance Festival (Werner et al., 2015). Spain and Italy have leveraged gastronomic and festival heritage to enhance tourism experiences and cultural sustainability (Richards, 2002; Bessière, 1998; Di Giovine, 2009). Similarly, New Zealand and Australia actively integrate indigenous intangible heritage into tourism narratives (McIntosh, 2004; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2009).

In China, intangible cultural heritage has been strategically incorporated into national tourism policies, supporting regional economic development and cultural preservation (Wang et al., 2024; Li et al., 2008). Government initiatives emphasize the need for sustainable utilization of ICH through tourism, balancing authenticity and economic viability (Sofield & Li, 1998). Scholars have extensively discussed cases such as Kunqu Opera and Xi'an Drum Music, illustrating effective integration strategies (Xie, 2011; Lu et al., 2022; Yang & Wall, 2008). However, challenges persist, notably in commercialization and heritage authenticity concerns (Shepherd, 2013; Zhu, 2012).

Changsha's local heritage presents a microcosm of China's broader approach to cultural heritage tourism. Scholars highlight Changsha's unique cultural assets such as Xiang embroidery and Liuyang fireworks, reflecting regional characteristics conducive to sustainable tourism (An, 2011; Zhang, 2015). Recent studies emphasize community participation and government policies' effectiveness in safeguarding Changsha's intangible heritage (Hong & Xu, 2022; Wen, 2025). Yet, ongoing challenges include insufficient youth engagement and limited integration between heritage inheritors and modern tourism strategies (Yuan et al., 2014; Huang, 2006; Yang & Wall, 2022).

Despite robust theoretical frameworks and international best practices, localized empirical evidence remains insufficient, especially regarding specific urban contexts such as Changsha. This research addresses the empirical gap in understanding how Changsha can effectively integrate intangible cultural heritage with sustainable tourism, considering local socioeconomic dynamics and cultural specifics. Additionally, existing research indicates that international diplomacy and economic sanctions historically had limited effectiveness in curbing Japan's aggression in East Asia, highlighting further the importance of cultural protection and international cooperation in maintaining regional peace and stability (Ge, 2025).

### 1.3. Research Significance

As contemporary tourism evolves, visitors increasingly seek meaningful experiences that offer spiritual enrichment, cultural immersion, and authentic connections to local communities. ICH deeply embedded in local traditions and collective memories, represents an invaluable resource that meets these evolving demands, enriching tourist experiences while simultaneously preserving cultural identity (Richards, 2011; Blackstock, 2005). Existing literature highlights how effectively integrating ICH into tourism not only supports cultural sustainability but also generates substantial economic and social benefits, fostering community pride and regional identity (Moscardo, 2008; Richards, 2002; Di Giovine, 2009). Besides, Changsha, with its illustrious history spanning over three millennia, boasts rich intangible cultural assets, including Xiang embroidery, Liuyang fireworks, traditional opera, and diverse folk customs, each deeply symbolic of the region's distinctive Xiang-Chu identity.

Despite this wealth, empirical exploration of strategic, holistic integration of Changsha's intangible heritage into sustainable tourism remains limited. Addressing this gap, the current study provides a detailed analysis of the opportunities and challenges in sustainably leveraging intangible cultural heritage for tourism development in Changsha.

This research makes significant contributions by proposing practical and contextually tailored strategies for revitalizing Changsha's intangible cultural heritage within a sustainable tourism framework. It emphasizes the critical roles of community involvement, intergenerational engagement, creative cultural products, and innovative promotional strategies often overlooked in existing studies (Wang et al., 2024; Zhu, 2012; Zhang, 2015). Furthermore, this paper enriches the Special Issue's discourse by demonstrating how tourism strategies focused on intangible heritage can holistically promote cultural vitality, economic sustainability, and the enduring preservation of cultural memories, offering insights applicable beyond Changsha to other heritage-rich contexts globally.

## 2. Materials and Methods

Building upon these insights, this paper starts from the actual situation of Chang-

sha City, consults the city's cultural and tourism survey report, and collects information from various museums, cultural centers, and intangible cultural heritage museums in the city to understand the current situation of Changsha's intangible cultural heritage protection and tourism utilization. Based on an objective analysis of the tourism development of Changsha's intangible cultural heritage, an in-depth discussion is conducted. Through the investigation, problems existing in the protection and utilization of Changsha's intangible cultural heritage have been identified, and practical and feasible solutions and measures have been proposed based on these problems and the characteristics of the Changsha region.

The research methods used mainly include survey and interview methods, literature analysis methods, and comparative research methods. The author visited Hunan Provincial Museum, Changsha Museum, and Changsha Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition Hall to watch the intangible cultural heritage exhibition and went to Tongguan Kiln to experience ceramic production. The author consulted relevant domestic and foreign research using CNKI, the school library, and major databases to comprehensively collect information, providing theoretical support for the article. In recent years, advanced machine learning techniques such as kernel-based subspace clustering have also been applied in cultural and behavioral data analysis, offering new possibilities for structuring complex datasets in heritage research (Xu, Chen, & Wang, 2025). By consulting many documents from provinces, cities, and other countries, the actual situation of Changsha was compared to ensure the feasibility of the article. Regions with similar characteristics to Changsha are given priority, such as Jiangxi Province, Anhui Province, Wuhan City, etc. This study primarily focuses on national and provincial-level intangible cultural heritage located in the central urban areas of Changsha. Research participants mainly include ICH inheritors, museum administrators, and selected visitors. Due to logistical constraints, the study does not cover intangible cultural heritage projects in suburban areas, which constitutes a limitation.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Categories and Characteristics

##### 3.1.1. Categories of Changsha's Intangible Cultural Heritage

According to statistics from the Changsha Municipal Bureau of Culture, Tourism, Radio, Film and Television on the official website of the Changsha Municipal People's Government, as of November 2022, Changsha has a total of nine national intangible cultural heritages, which were evaluated in five batches. There are 26 provincial intangible cultural heritages, including one in the first batch, three in the second batch, four in the third batch, nine in the fourth batch, and nine in the fifth batch. The municipal intangible cultural heritage is divided into seven batches, totaling 93 items.

According to the form of expression, in the national intangible cultural heritage list, Changsha's nine items cover eight of the ten categories. In the provincial intangible cultural heritage list, 26 items cover nine of the ten categories. In the mu-

municipal intangible cultural heritage list, 93 items cover all major categories.

According to the table, it is not difficult to find that Changsha has a large number of traditional skills intangible cultural heritage, while folk art, literature and dance are very few. Changsha's three thousand years of culture actually has a large number of local folk customs, so there is still great potential for more folk customs to be declared and recognized as intangible cultural heritage.

### 3.1.2. Characteristics of Changsha's Intangible Cultural Heritage

Changsha has registered more than 1300 intangible cultural heritage projects in the city, involving ten categories, with the characteristics of large number, variety and wide distribution. Intangible cultural heritage is distributed and circulated in Changsha city and surrounding counties. According to the principle of territorial protection, all intangible cultural heritage projects are divided into nine districts and counties, namely Yuhua District, Kaifu District, Furong District, Tianxin District, Changsha County, Yuelu District, Wangcheng District, Liuyang City (county-level city), and Ningxiang City (county-level city) (Zhang, 2020). Kaifu District and Liuyang City have the most intangible cultural heritage enterprises. Kaifu District is especially known for the national intangible cultural heritage Xiang embroidery, whereas Liuyang is recognized for Liuyang fireworks. Xiang embroidery has distinct Xiang and Chu cultural characteristics and is known as one of the four famous embroideries in China, along with Yue embroidery, Su embroidery, and Shu embroidery. Liuyang fireworks are world-famous and can be seen at many large-scale events such as the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games.

Changsha's intangible cultural heritage also offers a strong sense of participation and experience, with many traditional skills involving drama and music. For example, Hunan's traditional local opera, Xiang Opera, is sung in the Changsha dialect, integrating music, dance, language and folk sports. Changsha Flower Drum Opera is even more famous, with pieces such as "Liu Hai Kan Qiao" well-known throughout the country. Attractions like Changsha Fire Palace and Tongguan Kiln Ancient Town incorporate these performances and related activities, attracting numerous tourists. The Fire Palace Temple Fair features Xiang Opera, Changsha Flower Drum Opera, Changsha Tanci, juggling, sugar painting, paper cutting, and other folk arts, which collectively enhance visitors' sense of freshness and satisfaction.

Changsha's intangible cultural heritage has strong national and regional characteristics and is considered an important part of Hunan culture. Hunan's geographical environment forms a horse shoe shaped area surrounded by mountains on three sides, while Changsha itself is relatively flat. These cultural heritages, whether in traditional skills, folk music, or drama, are deeply rooted in the daily life of the local people, reflecting distinct Xiang-Chu cultural charm.

To better understand how these ICH assets are being protected and utilized in modern contexts, the following section examines recent government initiatives, economic data, and the distribution of inheritor resources in Changsha.

## 3.2. Current Status

### 3.2.1. Current Status of Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection in Changsha

Changsha's intangible cultural heritage protection work started to get on track in 2014. In 2014, with the approval of the Changsha Municipal Editorial Committee, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Department of the Changsha Municipal Bureau of Culture, Broadcasting, and News was established. In December of the same year, the Changsha Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Association was also formed. After that, Changsha formulated many laws and regulations related to intangible cultural heritage to promote the legalization of protection. Since 2016, the Changsha Municipal Government has begun to build intangible cultural heritage exhibition halls, and there are now more than 30 intangible cultural heritage experience halls. The Changsha Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition Hall, completed in 2018, is particularly representative, covering an area of 2023 square meters (Ye, 2022). The Tianxin District Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition Center and the Yuhua District Intangible Cultural Heritage Experience Exhibition Hall also actively showcase local intangible cultural heritage. Government leaders often conduct frequent inspections, especially of national-level intangible cultural heritage projects such as the Tongguan Kiln Ceramic Firing Technique.

### 3.2.2. Overview of Tourism-Related Data

According to statistics, by the end of 2021, Changsha's total tourism revenue exceeded 192.6 billion yuan, with about 182 million domestic and foreign tourists visiting. In the first three quarters of 2022, Changsha received more than 85.6 million tourists, making tourism revenue an important part of Changsha's economy (Zhu, 2019).

Moreover, the city's transportation network is well-developed, featuring major high-speed rail intersections (Beijing-Guangzhou and Shanghai-Kunming), a busy inter-national airport with direct flights to multiple continents, and an extensive highway system (Wang, 2022). Additionally, Changsha has a unique natural and cultural landscape: Yuelu Mountain and Orange Island are nationally recognized 5A-level scenic spots, and historical sites include the Mawangdui Han Tomb, Du Fu Jiangge, Tongguan Kiln Ancient Town, and more. The cultural and creative industries have also shown rapid growth, reaching an output value of over 200 billion yuan in recent years.

Policy-wise, both the central and local governments have introduced various initiatives to promote cultural-tourism integration. The Hunan Provincial Government's strategy of strengthening the provincial capital envisions building Changsha into a national tourism and leisure city and a world tourism destination by 2026 (China Workers' Network, 2022). The city aims to develop the cultural and creative industry into a 500-billion-yuan sector and the tourism industry into a 300-billion-yuan sector. Efforts like upgrading Hunan Provincial Museum, building demonstration sites for culture-tourism integration, and establishing intangible cultural heritage tourism streets (e.g., Yuhua Intangible Cultural Heritage

Folk Art Characteristic Street District) further underline Changsha's commitment to harnessing intangible cultural heritage for economic and social development (Sanxiang Metropolis Daily, 2022; Hunan Provincial Government, 2022).

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. Multi-Party Cooperation

The revitalization of intangible cultural heritage tourism requires the cooperation and efforts of multiple parties such as the government, society and inheritors (Ge & Rios, 2025).

The government is the leader, guide and planner of the revitalization of intangible cultural heritage tourism. The government needs to formulate relevant documents for the development of Changsha intangible cultural heritage tourism and formulate the future development plan and direction of Changsha's intangible cultural heritage tourism based on the actual situation of local intangible cultural heritage tourism development. It is necessary to promote the integration of culture and tourism with the concept of sustainable development, focus on the development of Changsha's characteristic intangible cultural heritage scenic spots, and radiate and drive surrounding areas. The Changsha Municipal Government needs to provide financial support for the protection and development of intangible cultural heritage tourism to ensure sufficient funds for the revitalization of intangible cultural heritage tourism. It is necessary to improve the salary and benefits of talents in intangible cultural heritage tourism, provide support for the production innovation, exchange experience, etc., of intangible cultural heritage tourism, and promote the productivity of intangible cultural heritage tourism.

As native Changsha people, residents in Changsha have a deeper understanding of Changsha's history and culture. The community can popularize and educate residents about traditional culture, enhance their awareness of the protection of intangible cultural heritage, make the people love Changsha's intangible cultural heritage more, and encourage more people to participate in the revitalization of Changsha's intangible cultural heritage tourism.

The training of intangible cultural heritage inheritors is also an indispensable part of the revitalization of intangible cultural heritage tourism. Changsha's intangible cultural heritage needs more inheritors, so the existing inheritors can recruit students from the society to stimulate the interest of more residents and tourists in intangible cultural heritage. At the same time, inheritors can post videos or live broadcasts on various social media on the Internet to show Changsha's intangible cultural heritage to the world, so that Internet users can have a deeper understanding of Changsha's intangible cultural heritage, expand the popularity of Changsha's intangible cultural heritage, and promote the revitalization of intangible cultural heritage tourism. Furthermore, advanced sensing technologies such as RFID, commonly used in health monitoring systems, can potentially be adapted for interactive museum experiences or live heritage demonstrations, enhancing visitor engagement and personalization (Wang, Zhao, & Wang, 2025).

Meanwhile, attention must also be paid to corruption, which can negatively affect the sustainable management of natural resources, making transparency and governance capacity-building crucial in multi-stakeholder cooperation (Hu, 2018).

#### 4.2. Innovation of Cultural Heritage Tourism Products

It is becoming increasingly popular to develop tourism products by drawing on traditional cultural elements. Developing intangible cultural heritage products is an important model for the static development of intangible cultural heritage. Tourism shopping can bring a large amount of tourism income. Intangible cultural heritage must obtain considerable economic benefits through the development of tourism products (Wang & Shi, 2017). Changsha's handicraft cultural heritage has high development value. The porcelain of Tongguan Kiln and the fireworks of Liuyang are world-renowned. Hunan embroidery, Liuyang summer cloth, Liuyang handmade bamboo paper making, Changsha folk paper-cutting, chrysanthemum stone carving, Changsha palm weaving, etc., are all suitable for development into tourism products.

Changsha can explore the integrated development of cultural tourism industry and arts and crafts industry by combing the intangible cultural heritage projects of traditional arts and traditional skills and combining them with the actual situation of handicraft processing industry (Lin, 2018). Extract intangible cultural heritage elements, such as images, colors, shapes, etc., and use modern materials and techniques to produce tourism products that meet the needs of contemporary people (Gu, 2019). For example, extract the classic elements of porcelain, shadow puppets, and paper-cutting and make them into refrigerator magnets, postcards, bookmarks, etc. Apply Hunan embroidery elements to school bags and umbrellas to attract more tourists to buy. We can vigorously develop intangible cultural heritage food. Changsha has many intangible cultural heritage foods, such as the eight traditional snacks of Huogongdian, Changsha Yang Yuxing egg noodles, Ningxiang four dishes, etc., which can all be used as tourism development projects.

#### 4.3. Enhancement of Promotion and Marketing

Changsha's intangible cultural heritage tourism revitalization needs to increase publicity efforts. As one of the world's media capitals, Changsha has very developed traditional media, new media, and online platforms, so it can use various media to promote intangible cultural heritage. Promote Changsha's intangible cultural heritage through variety shows or news programs on Hunan Satellite TV and Mango TV and insert Changsha intangible cultural heritage tourism public service advertisements on TV or websites. Cooperate with major platforms, such as Qunar Travel, Meituan Ctrip Fliggy and other platforms to jointly launch tourist packages for various attractions in Changsha. Regularly push articles related to Changsha's intangible cultural heritage tourism on online platforms such as Weibo and WeChat, and release videos related to Changsha's intangible cultural

heritage tourism on short video platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou to achieve better publicity effects. We can also use the celebrity effect to cooperate with local celebrities in Changsha to promote Changsha's intangible cultural heritage tourism and attract more people's attention.

#### **4.4. Summary of Limitations and Challenges**

##### **4.4.1. Advantages of Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism**

Changsha shows multiple advantages in developing intangible cultural heritage (ICH) tourism. Firstly, the city benefits from a convenient transportation system, covering railways, highways, waterways, and air routes. The well-developed infrastructure lowers travel barriers and enables a high volume of tourist inflows. Secondly, Changsha's rich historical and cultural connotations, including renowned scenic spots such as Yuelu Mountain, Orange Island, and cultural sites like Mawangdui Han Tomb and Tongguan Kiln Ancient Town, provide diverse attractions for tourists. Thirdly, government support is substantial: various policy documents have been issued to promote the integration of culture and tourism, leading to an increase in ICH-related exhibitions, experience halls, and integrated cultural spaces. Especially, in 2022, a dedicated intangible cultural heritage tourism street district in Yuhua gathered 359 intangible cultural heritage projects, including 10 world-class and 55 national-level projects (Hunan Provincial Government, 2022; China Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Association, 2022). Such initiatives help raise the visibility of ICH tourism.

##### **4.4.2. Problems and Constraints**

Despite these advantages, various problems persist in Changsha's ICH tourism development. Historically, events such as the Wenxi Fire destroyed many architectural monuments, leading to a loss of folk skills. Modern urbanization has also changed people's values and aesthetics, gradually weakening the living space for traditional intangible cultural heritage. Although the city has more than 1,300 intangible cultural heritage projects, only 9 are at the national level, and some categories like folk literature and quyi remain underrepresented. The distribution of ICH resources is scattered, limiting the formation of large-scale tourism clusters. In the context of such fragmented cultural data, matrix-based modeling methods such as deviance matrix factorization may offer new avenues for uncovering latent structure and guiding resource clustering strategies (Wang & Carvalho, 2023).

Another pressing issue is the insufficient talent pool. Many traditional skills require extensive time and energy to learn, but younger generations may lack the motivation or financial support to inherit these arts. Consequently, ICH inheritors are aging, and some heritages face the risk of having no successors (Ge & Rios, 2025). Furthermore, public awareness and engagement are relatively low; many residents and tourists appreciate intangible cultural heritage but are unwilling to actively participate in hands-on experiences. Meanwhile, tourism products often lack distinctive features or adequate publicity, and existing ICH museums may be in remote areas with minimal foot traffic. Souvenirs at major tourist attractions

also lack a strong local identity. These factors collectively hamper the effective promotion and revitalization of intangible cultural heritage tourism.

In addition, this study primarily relies on qualitative analysis, which may limit the depth of understanding regarding the economic impacts and effectiveness of proposed strategies. A more robust approach might incorporate quantitative data, such as ICH tourism's contribution to employment or GDP, to better evaluate policy effectiveness (Richards, 2018).

Moreover, the study focuses mainly on urban districts in Changsha, excluding suburban and rural heritage projects. This geographic limitation could result in missed insights into more grassroots or diversely distributed heritage practices that are equally vital for holistic preservation (Yuan et al., 2014).

The current strategies for engaging youth and local communities may also not be detailed enough, potentially underestimating the practical challenges in fostering active, long-term participation. Future strategies should include structured school-based programs, apprenticeships, or digital storytelling initiatives to strengthen intergenerational transmission (Lu et al., 2022).

Lastly, while tourism is emphasized as the core vehicle for ICH preservation, the study may overlook non-tourism-based methods such as digital archiving, educational integration, or cultural exchange platforms. Incorporating a broader array of preservation techniques could yield a more holistic and sustainable conservation framework (Smith & Akagawa, 2018).

## 5. Conclusions

This paper systematically examined the distribution, characteristics, and tourism development status of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in Changsha. Based on literature analysis, policy documents, and field visits to museums and heritage sites, it proposed targeted recommendations such as multi-stakeholder collaboration, product innovation, and enhanced promotional strategies. Compared with existing research that often focuses on theoretical analysis or case studies outside Hunan Province, this study offers more grounded and localized insights into the integration of ICH and tourism in a historically rich city like Changsha. These findings contribute to both the academic field of cultural heritage tourism and local tourism policy-making.

However, this study also has limitations. The research scope mainly covers national- and provincial-level ICH items within Changsha's urban districts, and did not extend to more grassroots or rural heritage projects. Additionally, the analysis is primarily qualitative, with limited exploration of quantitative data such as the economic contributions of ICH tourism.

Future research should consider expanding the geographic scope to include suburban and county-level regions, incorporating methods such as surveys and quantitative data analysis. It would also be valuable to explore the long-term impacts of ICH tourism on local communities, including cultural sustainability, youth engagement, and the evolution of heritage practices in the digital age.

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All authors have the same contribution.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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